Commandant's NOTE

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DISMOUNTED BATTLESPACE BATTLE LAB
Putting the Ideas of the Future into Action Today

Some aspects of dismounted warfare have changed little in the past 80 years. We still shoot with iron sights, early detection of minefields is still difficult, and we still conduct night attacks using the doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures of decades ago, despite the availability of sophisticated night vision equipment and other technological advances. Given today's shrinking force structure, diminishing resources, and the ambiguity of the threats to which we may be required to respond, it is obvious that we cannot continue to do business as usual. We will have to structure, train, and equip the force in light of both the military situation abroad and the economic reality at home.

Today we have in our grasp technological solutions that can meet the challenges of our changing world, and we recognize that further innovative thinking at all levels can significantly improve our doctrine; tactics, techniques and procedures; training; leader development; organizational designs; materiel; and soldier support issues (DTLOMS). Our soldiers deserve the best we can offer them, and the Dismounted Battlespace Battle Lab will help us accomplish this, by providing the ways to examine the old paradigms, to retain those whose utility and relevance are still valid, and to replace the outmoded and inefficient ones with better ways of doing business.

The Dismounted Battlespace Battle Lab (DBBL) is one of six Battle Labs established by General Frederick M. Franks, Jr., Commander of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), in May of 1992. (The others are Mounted Battlespace; Depth and Simultaneous Attack; Early Entry, Lethality, and Survivability; Battle Command; and Combat Service Support). These Battle Labs provide the Army with an institutionalized means of identifying and evaluating new warfighting ideas across the DTLOMS, and the Battle Lab Integration and Technology Directorate coordinates the efforts of all Battle Labs within the Army.

The ideas that will fuel the Battle Lab effort come from many sources: soldiers, junior and senior leaders, Battle Lab staffs, Department of Defense staffs, the Army's research and development centers, private industry, colleges and universities, private citizens, foreign military organizations, and others. Each has a unique perspective on our profession, and each has the potential to offer innovative approaches to how we do business. Will all of the ideas drawn from these diverse sources be useful and lead to improvements? Probably not, but enough of them will be of sufficient value to offer insights that we can apply toward meeting the considerable challenges facing us. TRADOC is now structured so that these ideas and initiatives can be quickly passed on to the appropriate Battle Lab for consideration.

The six Battle Labs are organized and resourced to horizontally integrate their examinations of data collected; this means that an initiative being worked by one of the Battle Labs has visibility in the programs of other Battle Labs, in the service schools, in the joint community of interest, and even among our allies. This concept is critical, in that it ensures that DTLOMS developments are in synch across the Army and within DOD. This will go a long way toward reducing any duplication of effort, and will assist us in efficiently using the resources at our disposal.

The DBBL's charter and subsequent directives have focused the organization's efforts on the following areas:

- Improving the night fighting capability of the combined arms force.

• Improving target acquisition capabilities of the combined arms force.

• Increasing the lethality of dismounted forces through improvements to both direct and indirect fires.

• Improving the survivability of the individual soldier, with emphasis on countermeasures, monitoring devices, new lighter weight materials, and reduced signature technology.

• Developing better means of combat identification for dismounted soldiers operating as part of a combined arms force.

• Developing stand-off countermine and counter-booby trap technologies for light forces.

• Developing the digitized communications capabilities needed by the dismounted soldier operating as part of a digitized combined arms force.

• Developing the Army's doctrinal, training, leader development, organizational, materiel, and soldier support solutions to the threat of weapons of mass destruction, particularly chemical and biological weapons.

To accomplish these ambitious goals, the DBBL is organized into a Battlespace Board and a Land Warrior Test Bed. The Battlespace Board is charged with developing and analyzing the eight concepts described above, and the Land Warrior Test Bed provides the dismounted soldier modeling and simulation support to the Battlespace Board and other agencies.

The Battlespace Board consists of two Concepts and Technologies Branches and an ORSA Branch, while the JANUS, Scenarios, and SIMNET/Corps Battle Simulations/Battalion & Brigade Simulations Branches make up the Land Warrior Test Bed. A third activity, the Department of the Army Special Task Force for Second Generation (II Gen) FLIR, draws support from Fort Benning's Battle Lab. The II Gen FLIR Task Force is charged with the horizontal technology integration of II Gen FLIR throughout the Army.

Three articles in this issue amplify some of the topics I have outlined: "Owning the Night" (page 9) describes Battle Lab initiatives in the night operations arena, and "Warfighting Experiment During 1994 Infantry Conference" (page 12) takes a detailed look at the advanced warfighting experiment that will be conducted at the 1994 Infantry Commander's Conference.

The third article, "Enhanced Land Warrior Program" (page 20) was drafted by the Directorate of Combat Developments and reflects the cooperation between that directorate and the Battle Lab. Watch for future articles on the Land Warrior theme; it is indeed an exciting concept, and progress will be measured in giant steps.

Future issues of INFANTRY will highlight articles on such diverse subjects as operations other than war (OOTW), continuous operations, future mortars, sensors and robotics, and command post and bunker configurations and materials. A central theme in each of these articles will be the need to conduct warfighting experiments, in order to let soldiers in the field evaluate these emerging doctrinal, training, leader development, organizational, materiel, and soldier support concepts. These and other experiments of the Battle Lab have been facilitated by a number of initiatives; one of these is the FORSCOM commander's designation of the XVIII Airborne Corps as the Battle Lab's affiliated unit. This habitual relationship has proved to be mutually beneficial, with each having gained valuable information from tests conducted in areas such as night fighting enhancements, 120mm mortars, and operations other than war. Another arrangement now permits Battle Labs to conduct limited, noninterference experiments at the combat training centers (CTCs). The realistic field conditions available at the CTCs are invaluable for the detailed analysis of emerging warfighting concepts. A third opportunity for the exchange of information derives from the ability of industry to interface with combat developers and the Battle Labs in ways that more effectively focus industry technicians on the Army's requirements.

This, therefore, is the Dismounted Battlespace Battle Lab; it provides a streamlined, institutionalized means for defining DTLOMS requirements for the conduct of future battles. More importantly, it focuses on ensuring that our soldiers are benefiting from the best technology and warfighting ideas, and in the most timely manner possible. The DBBL has broken the old paradigm of "putting yesterday's ideas into action tomorrow" and has allowed us to put tomorrow's ideas into action today.